



TALKING POINTS

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“Connecting VETS to USDA Training Conference”

GOOD MORNING,

I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR COMING TODAY AND TO
RECOGNIZE AND THANK THE VETERAN-OWNED AND SERVICE
DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES AND
REPRESENTATIVES OF VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS IN
ATTENDANCE. I ALSO APPRECIATE THE TIME AND
COMMITMENT OF THE USDA PEOPLE HERE TODAY.

IT IS MY PLEASURE TO BE WITH YOU TODAY AND I WANT YOU
TO KNOW THAT USDA IS INDEBTED TO THOSE MEN AND
WOMEN WHO HAVE SELFLESSLY SERVED THIS NATION.

AS A NAVY VETERAN, I'M HUMBLLED TO BE PART OF THIS PROGRAM. HONORING VETERANS AND SERVICE DISABLED VETERANS IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THOSE WHO PUT DUTY TO THEIR COUNTRY BEFORE THEIR OWN LIVES AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE AND SUPPORT THOSE MEN AND WOMEN WHO, AS WE MEET TODAY, ARE PUTTING THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE TO ENSURE OUR NATION'S SECURITY.

THAT IS WHY WE ARE HERE TODAY TO EXPLORE WAYS TO CONNECT VETS TO USDA'S PURCHASING PROGRAMS. I AM VERY PROUD OF USDA'S SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM AND ITS OVERALL SMALL BUSINESS GOAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

SINCE THE ISSUANCE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 13360, WE HAVE INCREASED OUR CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES SIGNIFICANTLY. AS A DEPARTMENT, WE HAVE INCREASED OUR CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES FROM \$26.8 MILLION PERCENT IN FISCAL YEAR

2005 TO OVER \$100 MILLION IN FISCAL YEAR 2007 AND ALSO IN FISCAL YEAR 2008.

IN ADDITION TO INCREASING CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES, USDA IS AN OUTSTANDING SUPPORTER OF SMALL BUSINESSES PROVIDING OVER 50 PERCENT OR OVER \$2.7 BILLION OF ITS \$5 BILLION CONTRACTING DOLLARS TO ALL CATEGORIES OF SMALL BUSINESS IN FISCAL YEAR 2008.

HOWEVER, USDA, LIKE OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES, CONTINUES TO STRIVE TO ATTAIN THE 3 PERCENT CONTRACTING GOAL FOR SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES.

AS MENTIONED, WE SAW DRAMATIC INCREASES IN CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED TO SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES IN FISCAL YEARS 2007 AND 2008, OBTAINING 2.54 PERCENT IN FY 2007 AND 2.08 PERCENT IN FY 2008.

FOR FISCAL YEARS 2007 AND 2008, SEVERAL AGENCIES ATTAINED OR EXCEEDED THE 3 PERCENT GOAL AND I WANT TO PROVIDE SPECIAL RECOGNITION TO THEM. THEY ARE:

- THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE (ARS)
- THE ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE (APHIS)
- DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION (DA)
- THE FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE (FSIS)
- THE FOREST SERVICE (FS)
- THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL (OIG), AND
- RURAL DEVELOPMENT (RD)

ALSO, I WANT TO RECOGNIZE OUR THREE AGENCIES THAT PURCHASE FOOD COMMODITIES:

- THE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
- THE FARM SERVICE AGENCY AND
- THE FOOD NUTRITION SERVICE

THESE AGENCIES EXCEEDED THE 3 PERCENT GOAL IN THEIR NON-FOOD COMMODITIES PURCHASES. IN THE FOOD COMMODITIES AREA, WHERE THERE ARE A LIMITED NUMBER

OF SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES, THEY ARE WORKING DILIGENTLY TO LOOK FOR CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES TO BE FILLED BY SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES.

OF SIGNIFICANT NOTE, DURING FISCAL YEAR 2008, USDA EXCEEDED ITS OWN USDA-SPECIFIC GOAL OF 5 PERCENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PURCHASES FROM SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES. WE OBTAINED 6 PERCENT OR \$51 MILLION OF OUR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS FROM SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES.

USDA IS VERY PROUD TO WORK WITH VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS AS WELL. IN FISCAL YEAR 2008, USDA PROVIDED 4.89 PERCENT OR \$250.5 MILLION OF CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES TO VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES. WE APPLAUD THESE COMPANIES FOR THE SUPPORT THEY PROVIDE TO THE DELIVERY OF USDA'S MISSION.

IN CLOSING, USDA IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT SERVICE
DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES HAVE EVERY
OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN PROVIDING GOODS AND
SERVICES TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

WE HAVE A VERY AMBITIOUS PROGRAM LAID OUT FOR YOU
TODAY FOCUSING ON PROVIDING YOU INFORMATION ON HOW
TO DO BUSINESS WITH USDA, FIRST-HAND SDVOSB
EXPERIENCES AT USDA, AND TEAMING AND SUBCONTRACTING
STRATEGIES.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING OUR TRAINING CONFERENCE
AND FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF USDA.